

WE CLAIM:

1. An electrical assembly for use in an electrical system in which arcing can occur during mating or
5 unmating of two matable parts of an electrical connector, the electrical assembly comprising the electrical connector and a solid state relay, wherein the electrical connector is connected to the solid state relay so that the solid state relay shifts to an open
10 state during mating or unmating prior to initiation of arcing between the two parts of the electrical connector assembly.

2. The electrical assembly of claim 1 in which the solid state relay includes a power MOSFET comprising a
15 primary switching member, the power MOSFET switching between ON and OFF states without arcing to which an electromechanical relay would be subject.

3. An electrical system including an electrical connector and a solid state relay attached to the
20 connector to prevent arcing when mating contacts in the electrical connector are disconnected, the electrical system comprising:

the electrical connector including first mating contact means and second mating contact means, the first
25 mating contact means have sufficient current carrying capacity to carry the entire current through the connector, the second mating contact means being disconnectable prior to disconnection of the first mating contact means;

30 the solid state relay including a power MOSFET, the second mating contact means being connected to the solid state relay so that the power MOSFET is switched off when the second mating contact means are disconnected so

that no current is carried by the first mating contact means when the first mating contact means are disconnected.

4. The electrical system of claim 3 wherein the first
5 mating contact means comprises first mating pin and
receptacle contacts and the second mating contact means
comprises second mating pin and receptacle contacts, the
second mating pin contacts being shorter than the first
10 mating pin contacts so that the second mating contact
means is disconnected prior to disconnection of the
first mating contact means as the electrical connector
is unmated.

5. The electrical system of claim 3 wherein the second
15 mating contact means comprises a shunt engaging one
contact terminal matable with a second contact terminal
to form the first mating contact means, the shunt being
disengaged from the one contact terminal before the one
contact terminal is unmated from the second contact
terminal as the electrical connector is unmated.

20 6. The electrical system of claim 3 wherein
disconnection of the second contact means disconnects
the MOSFET drain from a sense circuit to charge up the
MOSFET gate voltage to the MOSFET source voltage to turn
the MOSFET to an OFF state..

25 7. The electrical system of claim 3 wherein the solid
state relay floats relative to ground when the power
MOSFET is off, to eliminate leakage current between a
battery and ground.

30 8. The electrical system of claim 3 wherein the solid
state relay is connected between a positive battery
terminal and a load.

9. The electrical system of claim 3 wherein current through the power MOSFET is turned on by an active low gate input.

10. The electrical system of claim 9 wherein the relay includes a monitoring circuit connected to monitor the voltage drop between source and drain of the power MOSFET, an increase in the source - drain voltage drop, above a reference voltage, resulting in a high signal at the gate to turn the power MOSFET off.

11. The electrical system of claim 3 wherein the second contact means is at a voltage substantially equal to a voltage at the drain of the power MOSFET, when the second contact means are in a mated configuration.

12. The electrical system of claim 3 including multiple parallel power MOSFET's.

13. A solid state relay comprising:

a power MOSFET for switching current to a load, the MOSFET including a source, a gate and a drain;

the gate comprising an active low gate for controlling source to drain current through the power MOSFET, the power MOSFET being isolated from ground potential except through the gate when the solid state relay is connected between a positive battery voltage and a load; and

a circuit for applying a gate input to shut off source to drain current when a voltage drop between the MOSFET source and drain exceeds a reference voltage; wherein the circuit and the active low gate are configured to float in the absence of an active low input to the gate, and are not tied to ground, to prevent leakage when the power MOSFET is commanded to a nonconducting state OFF state by removal of an low gate input.

14. The solid state relay of claim 13 wherein the circuit for applying a gate input to shut off source to drain current comprises a bipolar transistor that turns on to shut off source to drain current when the voltage drop between the MOSFET source and drain exceeds a reference voltage.

15. The solid state relay of claim 14 wherein the bipolar transistor includes an emitter base junction that monitors the voltage drop between the MOSFET source and drain.

16. The solid state relay of claim 15 wherein the emitter base junction is biased by a diode and resistance between the MOSFET drain and the bipolar transistor base, by a resistance between the MOSFET source and the bipolar transistor base and by a resistance between the diode and the MOSFET gate.

17. The solid state relay of claim 16 including a disconnectable contact between the MOSFET drain and the bipolar transistor base, disconnection of the disconnectable contact from a load turning the bipolar transistor ON and the power MOSFET off.

18. A solid state Form A relay including a first relay terminal (30) connectable to a high battery voltage potential, a second relay terminal (87) connectable to the high side of a load, and a third relay terminal (86) comprising a signal input terminal, the solid state Form A relay including circuitry comprising:

a power MOSFET having a source connected to the first relay terminal (30) and a drain connected to the second relay terminal (87);

the power MOSFET including a gate connected to the third relay terminal (86), the power MOSFET being turned

to an On state by an active low input applied to the third relay terminal (86);

a pull up resistor connected between the first and third relay terminal (30 and 86);

5 a voltage sensing circuit comprising means for sensing source-drain voltage drop when the power MOSFET is in an ON state, the voltage sensing circuit being connected to the gate so that when the source-drain voltage drop exceeds a reference level, the power MOSFET
10 is turned to an OFF state; and

the solid state Form A relay circuitry floating relative to ground potential when the active low input is removed from the third terminal (86) so that leakage current between a high battery voltage potential and a
15 ground voltage potential is eliminated when the power MOSFET and the solid state form A relay are commanded to an OFF state by the absence of an active low input at the third relay terminal (86).

19. The solid state Form A relay of claim 18 wherein
20 the first, second, and third relay terminals are configured in a standard electromechanical relay pin configuration so that the solid state Form A relay can be substituted for a standard electromechanical relay without introducing a leakage path across the solid
25 state Form A relay when the solid state Form A relay is commanded to an OFF state.

20. The solid state Form A relay of claim 19 wherein the first, second, and third relay terminals are configured in a standard ISO 7588-2 mini relay pin
30 configuration.

21. The solid state Form A relay of claim 19 wherein the first, second, and third relay terminals are

configured in a standard mini SAE J1744 relay pin configuration.

22. The solid state Form A relay of claim 18 including an additional relay terminal (85) connectable to a
5 ground voltage potential and a zener diode connected between the first and the additional relay terminals.

23. The solid state Form A relay of claim 22 including a free wheeling diode connected between the second and the additional relay terminals.

10 24. The solid state Form A relay of claim 18 including an additional relay terminal, the additional relay terminal being unconnected to any circuitry in the solid state Form A relay, wherein the first, second, third and the additional relay terminals are configured in a
15 standard electromechanical relay pin configuration so that the solid state Form A relay can be substituted for a standard electromechanical relay without introducing a leakage path across the solid state Form A relay when the solid state Form A relay is commanded to an OFF
20 state.

25 A solid state relay including a first relay terminal (30) connectable to a high battery voltage potential, a second relay terminal (87) connectable to the high side of a load, a third relay terminal (86) comprising a signal input terminal, and a fourth relay
25 terminal (87a) comprising a voltage sense pin, the solid state relay including circuitry comprising:

a power MOSFET having a source connected to the first relay terminal (30) and a drain connected to the
30 second relay terminal (87) and the fourth relay terminal (87a);

the power MOSFET including a gate connected to the third relay terminal (86), the power MOSFET being turned

to an On state by an active low input applied to the third relay terminal (86);

a pull up resistor connected between the first and third relay terminal (30 and 86);

5 a voltage sensing circuit comprising means for sensing source-drain voltage drop when the power MOSFET is in an ON state, the voltage sensing circuit being connected to the gate so that when the source-drain voltage drop exceeds a reference level, the power MOSFET
10 is turned to an OFF state;

the fourth relay terminal (87a) being connected to the voltage sensing circuit so that upon disconnection of the fourth relay terminal (87a) from a voltage at the second relay terminal, the power MOSFET is turned to the
15 OFF state; and

the solid state relay circuitry floating relative to ground potential when the active low input is removed from the third terminal (86) so that leakage current between a high battery voltage potential and a ground
20 voltage potential is eliminated when the power MOSFET and the solid state relay are commanded to an OFF state by the absence of an active low input at the third relay terminal (86).

26. The solid state relay of claim 25 wherein the
25 first, second, third and fourth relay terminals are configured in a standard electromechanical relay pin configuration so that the solid state relay can be substituted for a standard electromechanical relay without introducing a leakage path across the solid
30 state relay when the solid state relay is commanded to an OFF state.

27. The solid state relay of claim 26 wherein the first, second, third and fourth relay terminals are

configured in a standard ISO 7588-2 mini relay pin configuration.

28. The solid state relay of claim 26 wherein the first, second, third, and fourth relay terminals are
- 5 configured in a standard mini SAE J1744 relay pin configuration.